

The Sun.

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WHAT! NOVELS BY THE POUND?

THE VERY SUGGESTION SHOCKS
MOST BRITISH WRITERS.

Bernard Shaw One of Those Who Favor the Idea Japanese View of the Suffrage Question \$1,250,000 a Day in the World's Gold Output "How Make People Good?" Chinese Investigators Ask Child Marriage in India Red Tape in Germany Turkey's Population Underestimated Settling Labor Disputes in England Americans Dislike the English as Tourists.

London Sept 14. The popular novelists of this country are volubly indignant and the public is mildly interested concerning a discussion of the question, What is the proper length of a novel?

The Westminster Gazette has furnished the forum and few indeed among the prominent authors and publishers have refused the invitation to appear on it. The hard-headed unimaginative publishers are inclined on the whole to agree that public taste and business reasons fix the standard at about 100,000 words.

The makers of fiction collectively and unanimously resent the insinuation that their work should be measured with a yardstick or sold by the pound.

The same of their replies is sometimes brief, sometimes arctic, but it almost invariably leads to the conclusion, expressed in great variety of language, that a bad novel cannot be too short nor a good one too long. There is little that remains to say after one has quoted George Bernard Shaw's cheerful irony in discussing the question:

"In my opinion fiction should be sold by the pound, as blue books are. I attribute a good deal of the steadiness of my own market to the fact that I have always thoroughly understood that people have to lay in a household store of reading, just as they have to lay in a household store of tea or cheese, and that they expect four-and-sixpence worth of it to last a certain time."

"I should like to take this opportunity of informing my customers that my next volume will contain three complete plays and three prefaces comparable to royal commission reports on subjects of universal interest. It will keep an average man of business in active reading for a fortnight, and will last the family fully a month, and it will bear reading over again once every eighteen months for life."

"This estimate does not include reading in bed, but it will be found under rather than over the mark with fair reading. You save money by buying my books. Books are like shoots; if only they are readable and fit comfortably, those which last longest are the best." Mr. Henemann was the first publisher to grasp this fact, though it had long been familiar to every man of moderate means with a household of daughters all clamoring for something to read. Hence the 100,000 word novel."

A curious comment on the woman suffrage agitation in England and America appears here to-day in the form of a letter to a daily paper from H. Kanazawa, professor of English in the Peers' School of Tokyo who is on a visit to London. In giving the Japanese view he observes that the question is not a pressing one in his country and continues:

"The vote were all that English women wanted this question would not be so important but I think that votes for women are only expression of the general disengagement with the relationship between the sexes here."

English people forget that the relationship between the sexes in their country is very peculiar. First of all, men and women do not enjoy themselves in each other's society so much as elsewhere. They play games or sit in their clubs and smoking rooms by themselves. The ladies in the parks are silent and have no pretty ways for each other; they hope only that friends will see them with girls.

In Japan there is no enjoyment for young people without the society of women. Our men are more immoral than our British, but we understand women better, and although we are somewhat brutal we can please them when we like."

At the old days lack of appreciation of women did not matter, perhaps it was a good thing it kept Englishmen moral and strong at work. But now strength only comes by being him a wife. For although women are not so much in need of the society they must desire a home.

Therefore my answer to my friend's question is that the suffrage movement is sustained at laws made by men in accordance with subconscious feelings of discrimination with the general attitude of the women of Anglo-Saxon men."

England's gold output has reached an average of about \$1,250,000 for each day of the year, and of that total the Transvaal accounts for one-third. Every year without the year, between \$2,500,000 and \$3,000 worth of the metal in ingots from 400 to 4,000 ounces, is sent to London.

This gold is paid into the local South African banks by the various mining companies whose amounts are credited with the fact that gold being worth \$20.91 per ounce, an ounce. The banks then make the shipment of the bars, and they go down to Cape Town each week and are sent to Southampton some seven weeks later.

Gold-laden ships generally arrive at Southampton on Saturday morning, the passengers once to London and taken to the Bank of England for safe lodging until the following Monday, when the contents of the vaults and handed over to the tellers. On the same day the bankers sell the parcels which, when treated at the hands of the mint, are 999 ounces in weight.

An act of 1844 the Bank of England is bound to buy all gold offered to it at the rate of \$19.05, approximately, an average standard gold. The owner can get directly if he likes to the mint, and it will be returned to him within twenty days in the shape of sovereigns, the difference of three cents between the gold and the mint price represents five days interest at 3 per cent.

The Bank of England is bound to buy all the gold offered to it at \$18.95 an ounce, it is of course always obliged to

pay out gold for its notes, and it often happens that bars and not coins are required, bars being less liable to friction if the metal is intended for export. The usual price at which the bank sells bars is \$19.05, but if there is a great demand the price may be run up to \$19.09. Beyond this figure it would not be safe to go because exporters can always have sovereigns in exchange for the bank's notes, and these sovereigns can be melted, so that the bank would have to replace them by minting some of the bars in hand.

It frequently occurs that gold from the Cape never goes into the bank. This happens when the bank does not want it and will pay no more than the statute price. Some other country may want the metal and instead of sending in notes to the bank for encashment may prefer to buy the parcels in the open market.

Here the price too may be raised by the agent according to the extent of the demand from half a cent to two or even three cents an ounce above the level of \$19.05, the limit in fact being regulated only by the ability always to obtain sovereigns from the Bank of England.

The danger of rushing into legislation on a theory without ascertaining the facts is illustrated by a human interest discovery which has just been made by the poor law administration. By last year's old age pension act all well conducted native British subjects over 50 became entitled to a pension of \$1.25 a week from the State. An extension of the act comes into force in January next whereby the disability of paupers to receive a pension is removed.

Political stump orators made a tremendous fuss over the necessity for immediate legislation as there were said, hundreds of brave old men and women in every ward suffering under the compulsory and crushing taunt of pauperism. To these, it was said, the old age pension would mean a return to independence and self-respect. They would be pensioners, not paupers.

Now the surprising fact has become patent that the great majority of the housewife inmates do not want their pensions and would rather stay where they are. One of the reasons is that in London it is quite impossible for old people to live on \$1.25 a week, and it is barely possible to do so in the country. There are cases of old men who left the workhouse to live on pensions of \$3 or \$3.50 a week and returned after a few weeks to the greater comfort of the workhouse.

The real problem lies in the attention which old people require more than in the actual cost of living. The difficulty is partly solved when the old people have relatives to whom they can go. But these relatives as a rule have their own battles to fight and will seldom have the enduring patience for a week's necessary attention for \$1.25 a week, and so the outstanding feature about aged paupers is their solitude.

On an average barely 17 per cent. of the almshouse inmates want to leave. The rest are content to remain. Some English almshouses are better appointed than others, and in these not a single application has been made for independence and \$1.25 a week. The solitude and infirmity of septuagenarians are problems which \$1.25 a week does not touch.

The Hon. Chien Hsu, Attorney-General of Pekin; Judge Shih Ying Hsu, Chi Chang Shen Wei Chang Lo and Y. T. Chang have travelled overland from China to England via St. Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, Milan, Paris and Brussels on an Imperial mission to ascertain in their own words "how bad people are made good," in other words to study the European systems of administering justice and punishment.

The custom of child marriage in India, although viewed with strong disapproval by the British authorities and not encouraged by enlightened Hindus themselves, proves to be too deeprooted to be killed in one generation by mere western disapproval. A British blue book just issued contains some striking statistics on this much discussed Indian problem.

Out of a total population of nearly 300,000,000 there are nearly 25,000,000 under the age of 20. Of these more than 360,000 are under the age of 5. The following figures are given:

Age	Males	Females
Under 5 years	121,500	148,000
5 to 10 years	250,000	270,000
10 to 15 years	2,589,279	2,684,168
15 to 20 years	4,359,388	9,344,718

The very early marriages are mostly in the nature of parental contracts or engagements.

The shipments of Swedish iron ore to the United States which began last year are assuming more important figures and a new direct Swedish-American steamship company is now being formed in Stockholm principally on account of this iron ore export. The steamers will run in summer from Lulea and in

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"It is not easy to make bad people good," he said. "In your prisons they are comfortable. Do they stop being bad because you are so kind to them?"

"They look contented. They look too happy. It must do them good. Boys are hard to make good. We are very eager to know how it is done. Girls, too."

"Punishment is not everything. We are told that some old Chinese punishments are bad. So were the English stocks and the rack. Not long ago you English used to flog people in the streets and hang thieves. Bad people in China would rather be whipped than imprisoned, so many are whipped every day. But so many now as formerly. Whipping does not make them good."

"Fine large prisons are being built in China, and warders are being brought from Europe to manage them. In many Chinese prisons eight or ten men are imprisoned together and that is bad."

And again Mr. Wang repeated the plaint which is as old as the world. "It is so hard to make bad people good. How is it to be done?"

Why the writing of the Semitic race should distinguish itself from that of nearly all other peoples in that it runs from right to left a question that has never been satisfactorily explained from a physiological standpoint, unless a new theory is to be accepted, put forward by Dr. Erlenmeyer, a German savant.

He maintains that the ancient Hebrews were all left handed. In support of his argument he quotes various passages in the Talmud, where special directions are given concerning the use of certain pharisees with the right hand.

Several passages in the Old Testament also seem to bear out Dr. Erlenmeyer's contention, notably in the case of Jacob and Job. The former, as related in the Book of Genesis, laid his left hand "wistfully" on the neck of his son, blessing upon the head of the first born of Joseph's sons.

The south Russian watering places at this time are full of Caucasian nobles and rich Armenian landowners, who are inveterate gamblers. Yalta in the Crimea, near which is the Czar's summer palace, has perhaps more luxuriously appointed gambling places than any other place of its size. A few days ago a sensational tragedy was enacted there.

The "millionaires' gambling club" an Armenian named Avasow lost in one night \$200,000 at cards. He borrowed \$50,000 more and lost again. In a paroxysm of rage he seized his neighbor by the throat, shouting "Your money!"

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It is heralded by a sudden swerve of the compass needle eastward. One rarely observed phenomenon was that for a fraction of a second the needle would point due east, to return slowly to its normal position. This was repeated for a time every three seconds, showing that an intensive magnetic field in the direction east and west was making its influence felt in intervals of three seconds.

Simultaneously with the periodical swerve of the magnetic needle, the negative electric charge of the earth was found to diminish by 10 volts under a clouded sky and by 50 volts in clear weather. These disturbances, it should be noted, were not accompanied by thunderstorms, although thunderstorms of great severity raged in southern Algiers, a rare event there and along the Mediterranean coast.

Splendid displays of zodiacal light were witnessed by the Saharan explorer, and these found afterward were coincident with earth tremors in southern Europe and with an unusually magnificent display of aurora borealis in Scandinavia. M. Nodon ascribes these electric phenomena to the sunspots which were plentiful at the time.

Blessed is he who expects little," ought to be the motto of the hospice on the summit of the Simplon Mountain in Switzerland.

The hospice, which is situated at an elevation of 6,150 feet and is the halfway house between Switzerland and Italy, is maintained by the monks of St. Augustin for the shelter and comfort of Alpine travellers. The fathers take no money in payment for their hospitality, but travellers are expected to place a gift on leaving in a box near the door.

This season the number of visitors, most of whom make a stay of two days at the hospice, has established a record and so have the takings, though in an inverse direction. The prior of the hospice himself declares that after a whole week of hard work, when the house was crowded every night and many had to sleep in the corridors, the money found in the box amounted in all to 45 cents, or 9 cents.

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